



SUMMER 2018

FRONTLINES

REPORTING YOUR IMPACT ON THE WORLDWIDE BIBLE TRANSLATION MOVEMENT

UGANDA'S GWERE PEOPLE CELEBRATE THEIR NEW TESTAMENT

Launch day (dedication day) dawned for the Gwere New Testament. Buses arrived, bringing church choirs and school groups. In the middle of the grounds, an elderly man with a pair of crutches sat on the back of a motorbike taxi.

The launch team recognized him from photos of a thanksgiving service, when people had gathered to praise God for the safe arrival of the New Testaments. He had expressed determination to march into church with the procession holding a copy of the Scriptures, even on his crutches. He even danced with his crutches during that service. A team member went up and spoke to him.

"His name was Victor," she said. "I noticed his shirt bore the logo for the 'JESUS' film. I commented on this and asked if his was one of the voices for the Gwere language sound track. 'Yes! I was the angel Gabriel,' he told me proudly. Later on, during the launch, we all listened as he read the Gwere Scriptures, from Revelation 3:20-22."

Gradually, people arrived and took their seats. While the tents filled up, the president of Uganda arrived and was taken to unveil a special monument. The plaque on the base of the monument had been engraved with words from the Old Testament book of Joshua:

"Study this Book of Instruction continually. ... so you will be sure to obey everything written in it. ..." Joshua 1:8 (NLT)

Before arriving at the venue, President Museveni had also planted a mango tree seedling in the proposed "Bible Garden." This garden symbolizes the desire of the team that God's Word be planted in people's hearts and bear fruit in their lives. It will be a reminder to future generations of the coming of God's Word to the Gwere people in their own language.

(Continued on page 2)

(Continued from Page 1)

The estimated 20,000 people that attended the launch heard speeches from President Museveni and local leaders. The president congratulated the Gwere people on the launch of their New Testament. He challenged cultural institutions to encourage children to learn to read and write in Gwere. He then gave a donation (and pledged further gifts) toward continuation of the Gwere Bible translation work.

A local church leader spoke about God's Word being needed in every community. He called for unity among local leaders, and encouraged them to mobilize resources for the completion of the Gwere Old Testament, which has already begun.

"If the Gwere people can read the Bible and live it out," he said, "then God will have visited your community."



CELEBRATING IN THE MIDDLE OF NOWHERE

The 1,250 Mato are a forgotten people group, situated on the border of two provinces in the middle of nowhere in Papua New Guinea. There is no way they can afford the full cost of typesetting and printing a New Testament in their language. But the Mato Christians are rich in the Spirit and very much appreciate all that Wycliffe and SIL have done for them over the years, not only in translation but also in supporting their schools with teacher training and materials.

When presented with a sample copy of the New Testament used for testing and formatting and pictures, the people organized a celebration, and even people from neighboring languages came to rejoice with them. The pastor held up a sample copy and compared his feelings to Simeon when he held the Christ child, saying he almost thought he'd never

see the day when God's Word would be available to him in his own language, and how much he and the Mato people appreciated all the funds and hard work that people around the world had given to bring them to this moment.

Today the Mato people are excited in their worship, which is done mostly in the vernacular language; many have an intimate relationship with the Holy Spirit, and they even have a healing ministry. The church has grown, and people meet in their hamlets several nights a week for Bible studies and worship services.

Finally the New Testament in book form will be in their hands. The dedication is planned for August 14, 2019, commemorating the 24-year anniversary of their request for a Bible translation in their language.

GOSPEL COMES TO THE TUGEN

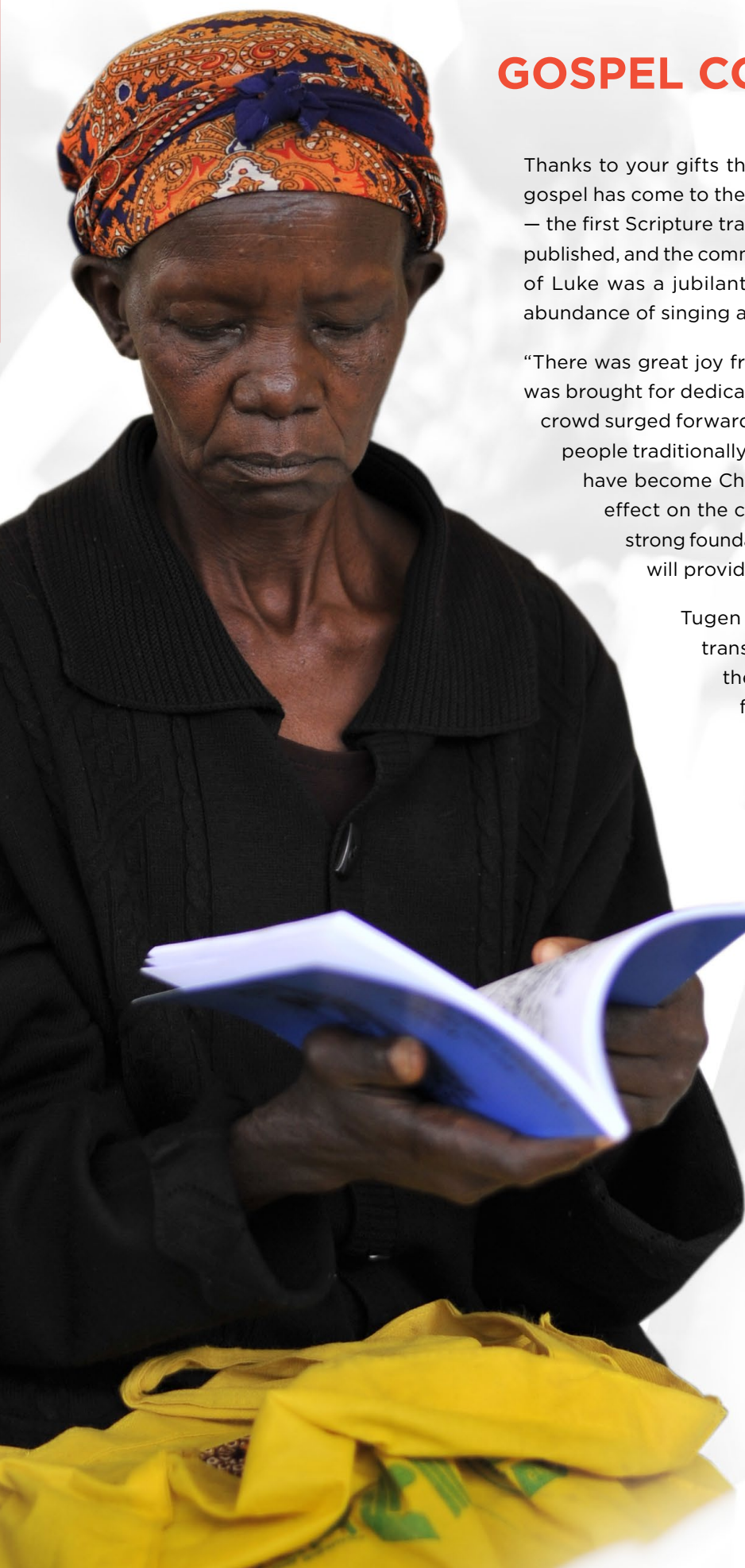
Thanks to your gifts through Wycliffe's Worldwide Projects Fund, the gospel has come to the Tugen Hills of western Kenya. The book of Luke – the first Scripture translated into the Tugen language – was recently published, and the community was overjoyed to receive it! The dedication of Luke was a jubilant festival, with a mile-long procession and an abundance of singing and dancing.

“There was great joy from the people when the Tugen Gospel of Luke was brought for dedication,” said a project adviser, describing how the crowd surged forward to buy their own copies of the book. The Tugen people traditionally pray to a god named Asis (sun), and while many have become Christians, traditional practices still exert a strong effect on the community's theology. The local church needs a strong foundation – one that this first critical piece of Scripture will provide.

Tugen leaders are excited to see how this Scripture translation will impact the community. Not only will the book of Luke provide the basis for the “JESUS” film script, but it will also speak to specific areas of interest among the people; for example, Jesus clearly addressed the topic of physical human needs in his teachings, a topic reflected within the Tugen community as provision for the poor and concern for clean water as a basic human right.

At a recent women's conference, one of the translators spoke about the translation work to generate interest in a complete Tugen Bible – and the local women bought every available copy of Luke! “The positive reception of these church women has given us a lot of motivation to continue believing that what we are doing is noble, and that we should work harder to give the Tugen people a Bible in their own language,” said the translator.

As they continue to distribute Luke, the team is moving forward in their work on Ephesians, Colossians and other New Testament books, knowing that the Tugen are hungry for God's Word in their heart language. **Thank you for partnering on this project and many others through the Worldwide Projects Fund!**



GOD'S WORD BRINGS JOY TO THE GUNGU PEOPLE

In a village in Uganda, the guard on duty at the local radio station opened the gate and greeted the team arriving with New Testaments. He eagerly watched as a young radio presenter opened a box and took out a copy of the recently published Scriptures. The guard had heard the excitement surrounding the Gungu New Testament the day before, when a special event had been held to dedicate the newly printed books. There, many people had heard God's Word in their language for the first time, and because many were inspired to buy copies, the team had run out and had to send to a nearby town for more.

Now, whispering, the guard asked his colleague to read a verse from Matthew. The presenter read the verse aloud while the guard listened closely: "What do you benefit if you gain the whole world but lose your own soul? Is anything worth more than your soul?" (Matthew 16:26; NLT). The guard urged the man to read it again, which he did.

Seeing the guard's interest, the team decided to give him a New Testament. The man leapt with joy, knelt on the ground, raised his hands in the air with excitement, laughed and hugged the Bible to his chest. "I've done so many bad things in my life," he said, "but now salvation has come to me. The Lord is with me!"



Still kneeling and swaying, he kept thanking them for the New Testament, and he called out the name of Jesus with great joy. Then he got up and started dancing spontaneously with the radio presenter, unable to hide his excitement — a moving and a powerful testimony to the impact of God's Word in the mother tongue. Someone asked if the guard knew how to read. "No," said the presenter, "but now he will be asking the young people in his home to read that Bible to him."

For a long time, the Gungu community tried to use the neighboring Nyoro-Tooro Bible, but without understanding it well. Church leaders recognized the Gungu people's need to have the Scriptures in their own language. During the Scripture dedication, a local minister exhorted the Gungu community to allow the Word of God to take root in them and to transform their lives.

She challenged them to see the Gungu Bible not as a trophy, but as life itself. Praise God for bringing his Word to the Gungu people in their own language. They have eagerly received it. Let us pray that many more people will experience God's presence in their lives through hearing and reading the Gungu Scriptures.

Your gifts to the May 2017 appeal letter provided the funding to print this New Testament!



GOOD FOR BUSINESS AND THE KINGDOM

In the 80s, Phil and Jamie Holtje started a screen printing business in the barn behind their Wisconsin home. From the beginning, the couple had a heart for charity that they infused into their work. God blessed their small operation and it grew exponentially, so Phil and Jamie set up a “Giving Back” committee of employees to vet new nonprofit organizations, and choose which to support through the company. Phil says, “The company has grown fabulously and we feel it’s in some part because of the dedication to charitable giving.”

Over time, the Holtjes began spending more and more time traveling to visit Giving Back projects, which led them to do something revolutionary. They sold their company to their employees through an ESOP (Employee Stock Ownership Program). As part of the sale, Phil and Jamie used a Charitable Remainder Trust to support the charities they cared about most. Phil says, “By doing the ESOP, along with a Charitable Remainder Trust, we were able to delay or eliminate all the capital gains on the sale of the business. It was a great way to maximize the funds available to donate to charity.”

Because of their desire to see people meet Jesus in their own language, Phil and Jamie chose Wycliffe as one of the charities that would benefit from the Charitable Remainder Trust. Jamie says, “We first got affiliated with Wycliffe through their partnership with the “JESUS” film, called the Luke project. Wycliffe translates the Book of Luke first as the film’s script. When you watch people come to the Lord and grow in their faith, you can’t help but want to give.”

Phil and Jamie want to encourage other business owners to consider how God might be leading them to use their resources. Phil says, “There are giving tools available that are good for business and for kingdom building – our story shows there is a way to do both!”

If you would like to learn more about Charitable Remainder Trusts or other tools for using assets for kingdom building, please call us toll-free at 877-493-3600, or email info@wycliffefoundation.org.



WORDSEARCH

STUCK TO JESUS

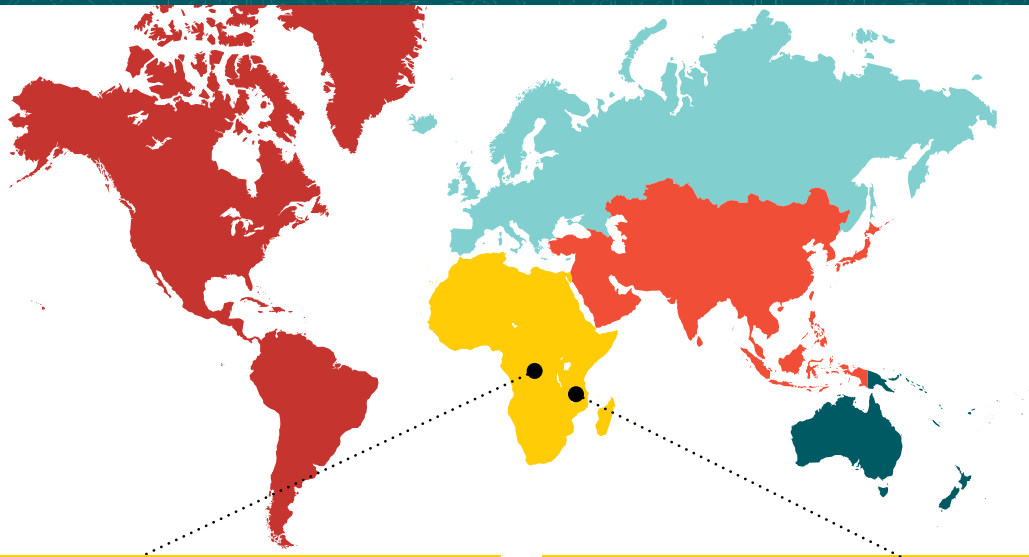
When the Aitape West Cluster translators in Papua New Guinea began working on 1 John, they struggled to describe the believer’s intimate union with Christ as it is expressed in the phrase “in Christ.” The cluster languages only use the word “in” literally, to convey the physical placement of one object inside another. After reflection, the translators found a way to communicate this crucial idea, saying that believers are “really fastened or stuck” to Jesus, in the same way that a lizard is firmly stuck to a tree. Please pray that the team remains “stuck” to Jesus as they diligently work to translate God’s Word.



NEWS + NOTES

FROM THE FIELD

Please pray for these Wycliffe projects around the world.



COMFORT FROM THE WORD

“During these past days, I have been feeling beaten down, discouraged and deprived,” said an elderly Mangbetu woman in the Democratic Republic of the Congo to a project team member. “If only I could read the Word of God, maybe I’d be relieved.”

When the team responded and helped the woman to read some Scripture passages in Mangbetu, she said, “Ah, thank you, God! I feel comforted, and my strength is renewed. I believe I have seen and felt you through these paragraphs.”

As translated Scripture is made available to the community, it will be used in churches, schools and a variety of meetings and cultural ceremonies.

“We want to see lives transformed and attitudes changed as a result of the Scripture translation,” said a project team member. In particular, the account of Jesus’ resurrection will help believers to put their trust in Christ, and to no longer fear death.

HEARING THE WORD IN A TAXI



A translation team member helped Donald download the Rangi Scripture app onto his phone. Donald, a Rangi speaker and safari driver in Tanzania, smiled and laughed as he listened to the audio of Genesis, reading along with the text on the app.

This was the first time he had ever experienced God’s Word in his language!

“It’s so touching when I hear it in my language,” he said. “I feel so happy when I hear it. My parents will be happy. They will share it with their community.”

Donald also said he would buy speakers and share the audio Scripture among Rangi communities.

The vast majority of Rangi speakers follow another major religion. But Donald now has hope. “This could be a turning point for my people,” he said.

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